

VZCZCXRO2774

PP RUEHBC RUEHDBU RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHIK RUEHKUK RUEHPW RUEHYG

DE RUEHBUL #1226/01 1021401

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

P 121401Z APR 07

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7451

INFO RUCNEXC/ECRBS COLLECTIVE

RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE

RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE

RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHINGTON DC

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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 001226

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DEPT FOR SCA/A, ISN/ECC PVANSON, ACHURCH, CBCRAFT; CBP/INA FOR CDONOFRIO, MMULLINS, ISAUNDERS, JSULLIVAN, JAHERN; DOE/NNSA FOR RSTUBBLEFIELD; DOC FOR ELOCKWOOD-SHABAT; DOT FOR APARAMESWARAN; SECDEF FOR MHOFFMANN, FLIGHT, AND RVIERKANT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETTC](#) [PARM](#) [ETRD](#) [PREL](#) [KSTC](#) [KNNP](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: EXBS Afghanistan Advisor Monthly Border Management Initiative Reporting Cable - March 2007

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Sensitive But Unclassified

II. SUMMARY

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: During this reporting period the Border Management Task Force (BMTF) was briefed by the European Commission and UNDP regarding the planned construction upgrades in Badakhshan Province on the Tajikistan and Afghanistan border for three Border Crossing Points (BCPs): Nusay; Segnan; and Eshkasem.

Representatives from the BMTF and the Afghanistan Engineering District (AED) traveled to Dushanbe, Tajikistan, to meet with US Embassy personnel to discuss infrastructure activity and cross-border coordination between the Tajikistan and Afghanistan border. The purpose of the visit was to discuss infrastructure activity and cross-border coordination. The BMTF acquired the Iranian infrastructure drawing from the Afghan Customs Department (ACD) that will be used by the Iranians to build the new BCP at Mile Marker 78 in Afghanistan. The Iranians previously proposed this new crossing. The GoA agreed to this, provided the Iranians would build the crossing facility. CSTC-A CJ-7 Army Corp of Engineers has completed the \$400,000.00 upgrade project at the Islam Qalah BCP. This project has brought some organization to the chaos that was present prior to these upgrades. Task Force Phoenix, a subordinate element of CSTC-A, Regional Corps Advisory Group (RCAG) and the Regional Police Advisory Team (RPAT) for the western region is coordinating a Regional Security Council with ISAF RC-West and the ANA, ANP and ABP to engage with the local elders in an attempt to find agreeable solutions to economic issues surrounding the presence of the central government's BCP operation. The BMTF briefed Richard Douglas, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counter-Narcotics, Counter-Proliferation and Global Threats, who was in Kabul to gather current information about programs and projects

being funded by DOD, specifically JIACG-CN. The BMTF also briefed Diana Brown who is part of the US Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Ms. Brown was in Kabul gathering current information from many GoA partners on programs that may benefit from services provided by the OSCE to bridge the gaps that exist in many sectors of donor supported programs. END SUMMARY.

II. ITEMS OF BROAD INTEREST.

¶2. (U) The BMTF was briefed by the European Commission UNDP regarding planned construction upgrades in Badakhshan Province on the Tajikistan and Afghanistan border for three BCPs: Nusay (\$160K); Segnan (\$290K); and Eshkashem (\$380K). UNDP is also planning cross-border training for ABP and Customs officials at these locations for cross-border familiarization of the Tajikistan and Afghan BCP operations. In addition, UNDP is considering employing subject matter experts as mentors for each of the BCPs on both sides of the border.

¶3. (SBU) Representatives from the BMTF and the Afghanistan Engineering District (AED) traveled to Dushanbe, Tajikistan, to meet with US Embassy personnel including representatives from the Defense Attaché Office (DAO), Department of Justice Senior Law Enforcement Advisor (SLEA) and the EXBS Advisor. The purpose of the visit was to discuss infrastructure activity and cross-border coordination between the Tajikistan and Afghan border. The following were highlighted as priority issues raised by BMTF and AED:

- Retention of the Nizhny Pyandzh, Tajikistan BCP construction compound (US Army Corp of Engineers) upon completion of the bridge project linking the 2 countries for deployment of BCP mentors/trainers to work one or both sides of the bridge.
- Provide focus/raise awareness on lack of a commercial compound plans at the Shir Khan/Nizhny Pyandzh crossing by securing donor funding options; plan/design/build commercial inspection facilities at NP. (The EC is constructing a large modern commercial facility on

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the Afghan side in Shir Kahn).

-- Plan/coordinate/conduct joint training efforts for Tajik/Afghan border officials using agreed upon standardized and vetted curriculums.

-- Promote communication between Tajik and Afghan Border agencies and promote better relationships between the border guards and their customs counterparts at their respective locations.

¶4. (SBU) In a related matter, members of the Tajikistan government had agreed earlier to train Tajik and Afghan border elements at the Khorog Training Center near the Afghan BCP at Segnan in Badakhshan Province. A memo was written by the First Deputy Chairman Mirzoev from the Tajikistan State National Security Committee (NSC) to the Border Management for Central Asia (BOMCA) and the Central Asia Drug Action Program (CADAP) programs of the European Union declining to train any Afghan personnel. Specifically, the document states "Due to structural changes, lack of required conditions, including legal barriers, we abstain from organization of training for Afghan border guards and customs in the Khorog Training Center." It also goes on to say "...the activity of liaison officers is inexpedient". This prompted a diplomatic note from the US Embassy in Dushanbe asking them to reconsider. No reply from the Tajik NSC has been received to date.

¶5. (SBU) During this visit, BMTF and AED representatives learned that the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) in Tajikistan is planning the construction of 2 bridges over the Panj river at the Tajikistan BCPs located in Vanj and Shuroobod connecting with the Afghanistan Badakshan Province. The BMTF is scheduling meetings with the Afghan Customs Department (ACD) and the AKF to address the issues of new BCPs at these Afghan crossing locations that were not previously taken into account.

¶6. (SBU) The BMTF acquired the Iranian infrastructure drawing from the ACD that will be used by the Iranians to build the new BCP at Mile Marker 78 in Afghanistan. The Iranians previously proposed this new crossing which the GoA agreed to if the Iranians would build the crossing facility. This location is approximately midway between the Islam Qalah and the Zaranj BCPs. The Iranians also

agreed to refurbish the Zaranj BCP in the southern Afghan Province of Nimroz. The German Police Project Office (GPPO) is scheduled to meet with Iranian Embassy representatives in Kabul to discuss ABP training previously offered by the Iranians. This will be followed up by a visit to Tehran by representatives of the German Ministry of Interior to discuss Iranian funding of Afghan police projects with a priority on counter-narcotics and border security.

¶17. (SBU) CSTC-A CJ-7 Army Corp of Engineers has completed the \$400,000.00 upgrade project at the Islam Qalah BCP. This project has brought some organization to the chaos that was present prior to these upgrades. The traffic pattern and resurfacing of the BCP roads has greatly increased the proper flow of commercial traffic into and out of the customs facility. Also, the areas of operation between the various border elements, i.e. pedestrian, immigration and commercial traffic have been sectioned off, thereby improving security within these respective areas.

¶18. (SBU) The \$15 million 450-day project funded by the United States at the Islam Qalah BCP is underway. BMTF has reached out to humanitarian organizations in Herat to direct their attention to the conditions of the local population surrounding the BCP in an attempt to garner their support. The RCAG/RPAT for the western region is coordinating a Regional Security Council with ISAF RC-West and the ANA, ANP and ABP to engage with the local elders in an attempt to find agreeable solutions to economic issues surrounding the presence of central government's BCP operation. A Civil Affairs humanitarian visit of the villages surrounding the Islam Qalah BCP is scheduled

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for the first week in April.

¶19. (SBU) BMTF representatives assessed the current situation at the Weesch/Spin Boldak BCP -- Spin Boldak BCP is 8 km inland from the actual crossing point at Weesch -- which serves as Afghanistan's main southern entry and exit point with Pakistan. Steel, raw materials and contraband cigarettes from the former Soviet Union travels from the Towraghundi BCP on the Turkmenistan border and exits this port for foundries and markets in Pakistan and India. Cars, produce, clothing and food products enter the port for use in Afghanistan. This is only a limited list of the products transiting this port on a daily basis. During a recent visit this month by BMTF and AED the following observations were made during a one day tour of the Weesch crossing:

-- The crossing point at Weesch is congested with commercial shops and residences that straddle the border leaving little space to construct a proper BCP.

-- Little or no inbound vehicle inspections by ACD or ABP immigration inspections were conducted.

-- None of the hundreds of donkey carts entering and exiting the border were stopped for inspection.

-- A sizable number of commercial trucks circumvented the customs process in Spin Boldak by entering private warehouses after crossing at Weesch, thus avoiding duties and adding to the leakage of revenue.

-- The following daily traffic estimates are considered valid:

- a. 800 to 1,000 commercial trucks (Jingle trucks)
- b. 300 to 500 small commercial trucks (pickup)
- c. 500 to 600 donkey carts
- d. 500 POVs

-- Pakistan estimates that 30,000 pedestrians transit this crossing each day. The BMTF team observed several hundred crossing the border in an hour mid-day.

¶10. (SBU) ISAF and CSTC-A report that the amount of uncontrollable traffic crossing at Weesch lends itself to easy access by insurgents and weapons smugglers. It is agreed that the construction of a fully functional BCP at Weesch would end the chaos and bring control and organization to the area, forestalling the free movement of illegal aliens, insurgents and contraband. Efforts are underway by

the BMTF and the ACD to gather donor support to fund this estimated \$14 million BCP construction. In the interim, BMTF has submitted suggested traffic patterns to CSTD-A CJ-7 engineers who have agreed to provide placement of structural barriers, i.e. Jersey Barriers, fencing or HESCOMS to gain some control over the Weesch crossing.

¶11. (SBU) The BMTF team met with the Kandahar Director of Customs who stated that his department could make land available for the construction of a new BCP. He claimed that the local traders also support such construction. ACD has been requested by the BMTF to begin identifying parcels of land in the vicinity that could be used to house the new BCP.

¶12. (SBU) INL/DynCorp mentors located in Kandahar possess a strong grasp of the local situation at the Weesch/Spin Boldak BCP. They are working hard to mentor the border police and are improving ABP operations. However, Afghan Customs operations fall outside the parameters of their mission and no equivalent with Customs experience is in place to mentor either the Customs Officials or Customs Police. Revenue collection is expected to remain stagnant until proper Customs procedures and processes are taught and ACD

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employees are properly mentored to carry out their duties.

¶13. (SBU) The BMTF briefed Richard Douglas, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counter-Narcotics, Counter-Proliferation

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and Global Threats, who was in Kabul to gather current information about programs and projects being funded by DOD, specifically the Joint Interagency Coordination Group-Counter Narcotics (JIACG-CN). The BMTF currently receives approximately \$11 million from JIACG-CN to fund approximately 10 of the anticipated 21 positions within the BMTF.

¶14. (SBU) The BMTF also briefed Diana Brown who is part of the US Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Ms. Brown was in Kabul gathering current information from many GoA partners on programs that may benefit from the services provided by the OSCE to bridge the gaps that exist in many sectors of donor supported programs. Ms. Brown stated that the OSCE is also redirecting part of its focus on the Central Asia countries in anticipation of supporting border security and cross-border integration with Afghanistan and its neighbors to the north. BMTF stressed the need for more training required for better effectiveness of the border elements and the introduction of a subject matter expert border mentorship program that requires help in developing.

¶15. (U) TRAINING CONDUCTED DURING REPORTING PERIOD.

Nothing to report.

¶16. (U) EQUIPMENT DELIVERED DURING REPORTING PERIOD.

Under Procurement.

¶17. (SBU) IMMINENT TRAINING OR EQUIPMENT STATUS UPDATE.

EXBS is awaiting the delivery of x-ray screening machines for baggage and cargo, fiber optic scopes, density meters, radioisotope identifiers, explosive detectors, handheld metal detectors, cranes, forklifts, vehicle inspection kits, and tool kits destined for the Islam Qalah and Towraghundi BCPs. Delivery is scheduled in April 2007 for the 3 x-ray baggage and cargo scanners; April 2007 for the explosive detectors and 2 - 40 ton cranes; and July 2007 for the fork lifts. However, no dates are available for the remaining items, but the EXBS Advisor has secured temporary storage for the equipment and will coordinate logistical arrangements as the equipment arrives. An 'End-User Statement' for the Sabre tri-mode explosive detection systems has been provided by the GoA and has been sent to the manufacturer as required before delivery can be scheduled.

¶18. (U) SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS IN EXPORT CONTROLS, NONPROLIFERATION, OR RELATED BORDER SECURITY.

Nothing to report.

¶19. (U) OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES/EVENTS.

Nothing to report.

¶20. (U) RED FLAG ISSUES.

Nothing to report.

¶21. (U) Please direct any questions or comments to Barry F. Lory, EXBS Advisor to Afghanistan; +93-700-073-652 or +93-700-108-272; lorybf@state.gov or to Cassady Craft, South Asia Regional Program Analyst, Office of Export Control Cooperation, 202-647-1063, craftcb@state.gov.

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